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THE  
HISTORY  
Of the Most Noble  
*ORDER of the GARTER.*

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THE  
HISTORY

OF THE MASSACHUSETTS

ORDER OF THE GARTER.

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HISTORY

OF THE

MOST NOBLE

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OF THE

GARTER.



LONDON:

Printed, and Sold by S. Popping, at the Raven  
in Pater-Noster-Row, 1712.

1. Novemb. [Price Three Pence.]



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LONDON:

Printed, and sold by S. Popping, at the Gunpowder  
in Pall-mall, 1712.  
[Price Three Pennies]



*S. P. Banks 1812.*

## P R E F A C E.

**T**Here being a new Election of Knights of the Garter, 'tis thought proper to reprint the following Speech, which contains the best Account of the Design, Antiquity, and History of the Order, that has yet appear'd in Print. It is contain'd in the Third Volume of State Tracts, printed in 1707. The Person who spoke it, is the Honourable James Johnstown Esq; who was employ'd by the late King William of Glorious Memory, to carry the Order of the Garter to the then Elector of Brandenburg, now King of Prussia; and therefore what is here deliver'd may be depended upon as Truth, so far as our Historys or Heralds can inform us of that matter.

in the  
pag.  
674:

Mr. Johnstown acquitted himself so well at the Court of Berlin, that King William promoted him afterwards to be one of his Principal Secretarys of State for the Kingdom of Scotland; and her Majesty, after  
her

## P R E F A C E.

her Accession to the Throne, was pleas'd to make the same Gentleman Lord-Register of Scotland. 'Tis thought fit to premise this, that the following History of the Order mayn't be look'd upon as an Account patch'd up merely to get a Penny, as is usual on such Occasions. 'Tis hoped that Honourable Person will not take it amiss, that this is republish'd without asking his Leave, since it is no where now to be had, but in the said Volume, which is not in every one's Hand.

If it be objected, that it seems too long for one Speech to a Sovereign; 'tis answer'd, We have been inform'd, that it was design'd for two Speeches, one at the beginning, and the other at the end of the Ceremony; but there being some Alterations made in point of Form, it was thought fit to speak it all at once, as follows.

at the Court of Berlin, the King William  
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their own Persons as Examples of Military  
 Virtue, and proves also the highest Honour  
 to be attain'd to follow it; for by these  
 Examples they defend from their Great

*May it please Your Electoral Highness.*

**N**othing excites in Men the Desire  
 of Glory so much, as signal and  
 lasting Marks of Honours. For  
 to Noble and Generous Minds,  
 Honour is certainly the greatest Reward; and  
 such Marks are the most acceptable parts of  
 it, to wit, a publick Acknowledgment, that  
 Men deserve it.

Of these Marks, the most Eminent have  
 been appropriated to Chivalry. Religion hath  
 its Treasury above, Justice and the other  
 peaceable Virtues, without Arms, would be  
 of little or no Use: Therefore Military  
 Glory, as most necessary, hath been prefer'd  
 to all others; besides, it is acquired with  
 greater Danger, and is founded on nobler  
 Passions.

Amongst all Incitements to it, nothing has  
 proved so effectual as the Institution of the  
 Orders of Knights - Companions and Bre-  
 thren. Such Orders do engage Princes, by  
 the strictest Tyes of Honour, to give in  
 their



their own Persons an Example of Military Virtue, and proves also the highest Encouragement imaginable to follow it; for by these Fraternities they descend from their Greatness, and consent that brave and gallant Men should be brought into a sort of Equality with themselves.

Amongst Military Orders, there are none that can dispute either Antiquity or Dignity with that of the *Garter*, which may indeed be called the Mother-Order; for the other great Orders have sprung out of this Root, being formed upon the Model of it.

Such Institutions, like other Things of the same Nature, in their first Conceptions, use to be imperfect, and calculated for receiving the Reformations that Time only brings: But the Rules of this Order were from the Beginning so well digested, that they have admitted of few or no material Changes. To the Antiquity and Wisdom of the Institution, I may add the Chastity of the Order. The Knights have at no time exceeded the first Foundation of 26, contrary to the Fate of other Orders, of which none have supported their Dignity as this hath done, considering jointly the small Number and singular Eminency of those that have been of it,

*viz.* 497 only. And yet amongst these there have been 8 Emperor's ( of whom 2, *Sigismund* and *Charles V.* went to *England*, and received it there, so much did they value the Honour of being of it ) 45 Kings, including those of *England*; and above 60 Princes, for the most part, Sovereigns, not to mention that the others, generally deserving to be Princes, were therefore by the Order, in a manner made such.

The Qualitys of *Edward III.* who founded this Honour, gave a peculiar Lustre to it. He was the greatest and bravest Prince of his Time, in the Opinion of all others, as well as of the *Germans*, who first made him Vicar-General of the Empire, and afterwards offered him the Imperial Diadem.

He claimed the Crown of *France* as his just and lawful Inheritance, and study'd by the Institution of this Order to engage the most Martial Spirits of the Age in his Quarrel. It was with his Garter that he gave the Signal at the Battle of *Cressy*, remembering, it seems, that which was reported of one of his Predecessors *Richard I.* That he had, upon a like Occasion, with great Success, made use of a Garter. In this Battle the whole Power of *France* fell before him; upon which

which Augury he made the Garter the chief Sign of the Order. *Richard I.* is also said, upon such an Account, to have had the same Design. Besides, a Garter is the Symbol and Badge of Unity, and therefore most proper to signify those Bonds of Amity and Affection into which all the Companions we to reckon themselves knit.

He delighted much in Devices, and chose for the Device of the Order these Words, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*; In *English*, *May he be asham'd that thinks ill* (or does not approve) of it: That is, either of the Order it self, or of his Title to the Crown of *France*, which gave Occasion to the Institution.

He made Blue the chief Colour, that being the Colour of the Field of the Arms of *France*, which, with the Title he had about that time assum'd, himself and his Successors have ever since us'd: Besides, *Blue* denotes the Sublime and Cælestial Temper of those who were to be of the Order. The Pilgrims that returned from the Holy Land, brought over such an Account of *St. George* (then the Christian *Mars*) particularly of his Tutelary Care of the *English* in that War, that,



that, according to the Perswasion of those Times, he made him the Patron of the Order, as well as of the Nation.

He wisely considered, that other Sovereign Princes might think it a lessening of them, to come into an Order subject to the Laws and Government of *England*: Therefore he entirely separated its Concerns, and made it a distinct Body with Seals and Officers, and Statutes peculiar to it, over which the Laws of *England* have no sort of Authority.

This is the Order, Sir, so deservedly famous over all Christendom these three hundred and forty Years, of which we have now the Honour, in the Name of the King our Master to present your Electoral Highness the Ensigns.

The same Order which his Highness your Illustrious Father desired so much, and received as a great Honour done him, and to which he did great Honour. He wore it in a time of Action, when the Fate not only of the North, but of the whole Empire, nay, I may add, of all *Europe*, turned according to the Measures that he took; and which is more, turned often with the Approbation of all good Men.

It was thus that he run his Career, which he finish'd with a Happiness that might be called the *Obtaining of the Prize*, if that were to be done here; for he went off, being full of Honour and Years, in Peace and Quiet, beloved and esteemed by the better Part of Mankind, leaving behind him the only two Things to be left, a Great and Good Name, and a Glorious Successor.

'Tis also the same Garter, as well as the same Order, with which we are to invest your Highness. This I should call a Happy Omen, that the Order is still to receive the same Honour: But your Highness hath not left the World to Divination and Conjecture; you have begun your Government in a Way worthy the Son of such a Father, and already given Mankind real Instances of that which they may expect. And now this Day you are to put the Order in Possession of the Honour which you have, as it were, advanced it to, and to which the Order hath a Natural Claim; your Highness having acquired the same as the Founder did his, by defeating the ancient Enemies of both Nations. For this Reason, I suppose the King my Master, as well as for doing your

your Highness greater Honour, hath sent you a Sword amongst the Ensigns of the Order, which hitherto was never done to any other.

Sir, Nothing is more evident, than that this Society was instituted for carrying on a War with *France*; in which War the Emperor, the Princes of *Brandenburgh*, *Bavaria*, *Lorrain*, and many others, were engaged by a Confederacy with the Founder of this Order, as your Highness, and others, their Successors, are now with the present Sovereign of it. *It seems, in all Ages, it hath been the Wisdom of Great Princes, to have no other Thing to do with that Crown.* Sure that which hath happened in this Age, doth not alter the Case; nay, the present Confederacy is a Demonstration that it is the Sense of Mankind, That the publick Quiet can be no longer secured by the Faith of Treatys; and therefore, that a firm Peace is only to be obtained by a hearty War: For Men that have enrich'd themselves by Violence, are fallen in love with it, will love on till they lose by it; and then it will be seasonable to trust to Treatys, when the Incapacity such Men shall be in to break 'em, will be Surety for their keeping them.

*Edward*



*Edward III.* design'd a Conquest, and succeeded in it: But here there is place for a yet more noble Design, that of REDEMPTION. The Work of a Hero is not to mind his own Business only, much less to do Hurt, to plunder the World with *Alexander*, or ruin his own Country with *Cesar*; but to do good chiefly to others, to chain up the Disturbers of the publick Peace, to set Bounds to the Exorbitant Power and the Will of Man; and so to deserve the Blessings of those that were ready to perish. All this the King, my Master, hath done, by redeeming his own Country from Ruin, and other Countrys from the Danger of it, in suffering them to become his own: Thus endeavouring every where to stem the Inundations of the present Times, as his Ancestors did those of theirs,

But to this, not only the Example of the Sovereign invites those of the Order, but the Order it self in a particular manner engages them, *Pugnare pro Jure & Tutitione appressorum & indigentium.* To fight for the Relief of the Poor and the Oppressed.

This

This, Reason, Humanity, common Christianity, and Interest too, require of all Men, much more of Princes that are to act as God's Vicegerents, who glorys in nothing oftner than in his firm Purposes to avenge and protect Widows and Orphans, and such others, the innocent, tho unfortunate part of Mankind ; to wit, by commanding, without Exception, all those that have power to do it, to punish their Oppressors.

Thus it is here, that a Capacity to do Good, not only gives a Title to it, but makes the doing it a Duty. 'Tis strange that among Christians in all times, there should have been some, who doubted of this, and have had narrower Thoughts of Heroical Enterprizes, than either the Jews or Heathens had ; nay, of whom some have believ'd all War to be unlawful, since the Design of Christianity was to exalt our Natures to a higher and sublimer pitch of Perfection, and not to stifle or undoe, by specious Pretences, that which is most commendable in them, the Inclinations and Tyes we may have to do one another Good.

The

The Jews of old had so noble an Opinion of such Performances, that they imputed them to Inspiration; they thought that without extraordinary Assistances, Men had neither Goodness nor Largeness of Soul sufficient for them.

'Tis true, several among them endeavour'd thus to defend the Irregularitys that sometimes did accompany such Actions, and suppos'd an exprefs Order from God, as necessary to justify them. Yet Rules and Laws are means for obtaining the Ends which they relate to, and in that relation cannot be too well observ'd; but they are not the Ends themselves, which must still be pursued, tho' in another way, if the ordinary way fails. No doubt, the Letter of the Law, that upon great Occasions opposes it self to the publick Safety, which is intended by all Laws, must needs be the Letter that kills. This those high Pretenders came at last to understand, (and to fight even on their Sabbaths) tho' their Laws were given them by God, and that it was their Humour to swallow Camels, and stick at Gnats; to let go the Substance of the Law, and perish in defence of the Letter of it. The true standing Character  
in



in all Ages and Nations, and ordinarily the Fate too of weak and warm, and obstinate (tho often well-meaning) Men.

Those Jews are much more in the right, who ascribe great Events more particularly to God, because of that which is singular (as well as of his Concern) in them. Thus they would, no doubt, judge of the late Revolution in *Britain*, where we have an illustrious Example of such sort of Events. In which the Concurrence of great Dangers, of an unexpected Opportunity to be deliver'd from them; of the Capacity and Circumstances of the Deliverer, as if they had been given for this End; of the evident Infatuation of those, whose Interest (and in whose Power) it was to have prevented it; of a multitude of mere Accidents, previous and absolutely necessary to it, which by human Wisdom could neither have been foreseen, nor procur'd; of a Chain and Coincidency of various, and often, in appearance, cross Events; yet, in Effect, so well agreeing with the Methods resolv'd on, that Divine Goodness and Human Prudence seem to have had a Correspondence. All this, with the sudden vanishing of Difficultys that had appeared, in a manner insuperable, and a Success worthy  
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of the Care of Providence (such as History cannot parallel) without Blood, Danger, or Disorder; so that the publick Peace and Quiet seemed rather not interrupted than restored, as if no Change had happen'd, except in our Hearts and Thoughts. All this, I say, does compleat an Event so much above the ordinary Course of Things, that whoever believes that God does at all concern himself in human Affairs, (much more such as believe that the Hairs of our Head are number'd) must needs conclude, that this whole Business was (to speak so) laid and concerted by him. *Sed præstat de Carthagine, ut aiunt, filere quam pauca dicere.* And therefore, to return to my Subject.

The *Heathens* went yet further in doing Honour to the Authors of great Undertakings: They thought they could not do too much to encourage Men to venture upon them; and therefore upon such Accounts they deify'd their Heroes; Men seem'd to them in their Performance so like the Gods, that they could not abstain from honouring the Copies with the Names of the Originals. The *Heathens* consider'd the publick Good that was done; for as their Heroes became their Gods for chastizing Oppressors, in their Opinion the Enemies

nemys of Mankind; so others became their Heroes for destroying monstrous Beasts of the same Temper. If we may not rather believe, as no doubt we may, that the Poets, the Historians of those Times, meant Men, (and to them gave the other borrow'd Names, as more proper than their own) whose Souls by Success in their Passions, were become as monstrous as they describ'd the Shapes and Voracity of those Beasts to have been.

Sir, How great and noble Thoughts would those *Jews* and *Heathens* have of the present Undertaking, in which the King my Master, your Electoral Highness, and so many other Princes are engag'd; an Undertaking, such as human Nature requires, where Honour and Duty, and Interest, go hand in hand together; and the most necessary thing to be done, is the greatest and best thing that can be done.

In particular, 'tis an Undertaking that will transmit your Highness's Name, Glorious to Posterity; for you first gave Life and Motion to it, by saving the Town of *Cologne*, and that whole Electorate, by taking *Keyserswaert*, *Rhimberg*, and *Bonn*; by routing the Forces sent to assist them,



and so delivering the *Lower-Rhine* from the Chains that in time must have prov'd those of the Empire.

Sir, you have thus out-done the Enemy in Diligence, their most commendable Quality, if it were well employ'd : You have overcome them, where they themselves, and others too, think them most Invincible, behind Walls. You have defeated their Troops, neither by Number nor Surprize ; Advantages are to be taken, but it is greater not to stand in need of them.

Thus your Highness hath begun the War, where it must end with Victory, and taken to yourself a Share in it suitable to the Dignity of your Family, and the Importance of the Conjuncture, which gave your Highness the Opportunity to signalize the beginnings of your Government, by doing the Publick such eminent Services ; as if Providence, in compliance with the Integrity of your Intentions, took care, that no sooner you should be in a Capacity to do Good, but that the Publick should require and receive the Benefit of it ; to signify to your Highness, that the Good of the Publick ought to be the End of your Greatness, and to others, that it is the End, and will be so.

Sir,

Sir, the great Power that God has put into your Hands, can at no time be better imploy'd. Without Controversy, the Peace and Happiness of *Europe*, during this Age, depends upon the Success of this War.

All Laws, Divine and Humane, of Peace and War, the Fences of the Publick Safety, are broke thro' ; those Eternal Dictates of Reason, the Obligations of Honour, Humanity, Oaths, Promises, Religion, as well as the Customs of Nations, which the Necessitys of Human Affairs have rendered inviolable, and without which the great Society of Mankind can no more subsist, than private Societies can without Rules and Laws : All these have been openly and avowedly trampled on.

Now, if the Ambition, and other Passions of Men, that have done such Things, have carried them so far, notwithstanding the just Apprehensions which, no doubt, they had of a general Resentment, whether will the same Passions not carry them, if the present Confederacy should happen to be frustrated, and there should remain nothing more for them to be afraid of ?

But

But better Things, no doubt, are reserved for this Age. The Chariot-Wheels of those that have ask'd Brick, and forbid Straw, begin already to move heavily; and provided the Easterly Wind continue to blow steddily, and neither little private Interests (sure little in comparison) nor certain Points of Honour (only tolerable when innocent) disorder the present Harmony, the Event is infallible.

For, nothing can contribute more to this, than the Happy Union that is between the King my Master and your Electoral Highness, which puts his Majesty and your Highness in the best Circumstances imaginable for preventing or removing Differences.

This, among other Reasons, gives Ground to hope, that the Confederacy is not to be broke, since the Union I speak of cannot be dissolv'd: It is strong, by all that is sacred amongst Men, the Tyes of Honour, Religion, Blood, Friendship, Obligations, Engagements; and I may add, of the same Interests and Designs with relation to the Publick.

To so many Tyes it may seem there need-  
ed no Addition of a new One; but his  
Majesty was resolv'd not to lose any Oppor-  
tunity



tunity of giving publick Instances of the great Affection and Esteem that he hath for your Electoral Highness : And the Knights Companions were unanimously of Opinion, That his Majesty could not better dispose of the greatest Honour that he can give, than by sending it to your Electoral Highness, from whom the Order may expect the greatest Return of Honour that it can at present receive.

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*FINIS.*

...of giving public instruction of the  
great Affliction and Misery that the path for  
your Electoral Highness: And as Highness  
Companions were unworthy of Opinion  
That his Majesty could not better dispose of  
the greatest Honour he can give than  
by bestowing it on your Electoral Highness  
from whom we may expect the  
greatest Honour of our Nation that can be pro-  
duced.



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